

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
22 February, 1977

AM

10:00 CONVENE, 708 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C.

ADMINISTRATION

- A. Swearing In of Philip W. Buchen, New Member of the Commission of Fine Arts
- B. Dates of next meetings: 22 March, 1977
26 April, 1977.
- C. Minutes of January 1977 meeting.
- D. Letter from Donald Shannon, ANC 3-A Chairman, on Demolition Techniques in Georgetown.

SUBMISSIONS-REVIEWS

- A. Smithsonian Institution
National Zoological Park, Beaver Valley Area.
- B. General Services Administration
Veterans Administration Hospital, Wing "A", Enclosure of Fourth Floor Terrace.
- C. D.C. Department of Economic Development
Old Georgetown Act
 - 1. OG 77-58, 1632 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Demolition of Existing Structure and Replacement with New Building of Similar Appearance - Resubmission.
 - 2. Appendix 1.Shipstead-Luce Act
 - 1. SL 77-28, 2710 Brandywine Street, N.W., New Single Family Dwelling.
 - 2. Appendix 2.

D. National Park Service, National Capital Region

1. Installation of Bust of Justice William O. Douglas, Georgetown Barge Landing, C. & O. Canal.

2. Bernardo de Galvez Statue, Final Pedestal and Site Plans.

3. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, West Potomac Park.

E. D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development

"Streets for People", 8th Street Lighting.

Historic Subdivisions

Appendix 3.

F. Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation

Pennsylvania Avenue Landscape and Lighting Plans.

INSPECTIONS

Freer Gallery

Objects for Acquisition.

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON THE OLD GEORGETOWN ACT

22 February, 1977

NO. ADDRESS AND OWNER

PROJECT

OG 77-

46 3261 K Street, N.W.
Marvin Weissberg

Multi-use development including office, retail, and apartment space on old Flour Mill site (resubmission refer to OG 77-40).

ACTION: Preliminary approval subject to development of more specific designs, landscape plans, details, material selections, etc. Additional study ought to be given to the replacement of windows in the original mill building, including the possibility of restoring the original size small openings with original-type sash and allowing sheet glass to go into odd-sized openings that are being changed in use. Endorse concept of cleaning up Fish Market Square and making it a public amenity, though the preliminary designs shown may be overly-complicated for this simple, cobbled space. 2/3/77

49 3000 M Street, N.W.
Gus Levathes

Construction of hotel/commercial/office building (resubmission refer to OG 77-42).

ACTION: Preliminary approval subject to submission of detailed development and working drawings, details, signs, and landscaping. 2/3/77

51 3314 P Street, N.W.
George Clark
ACTION: Issue permit. 2/4/77

Enclose second floor side porch with six aluminum sliding glass doors.

52 3330 Reservoir Road, N.W.
Dr. Javier Sagaminaga

Foyer addition to front of existing residence (resubmission refer to OG 77-10).

ACTION: Issue permit. Suggest new windows be slightly closer to door. 2/16/77

53 1645 35th Street, N.W.
Raymond Baker
ACTION: Issue permit. 2/16/77

Replace existing delapidated 6' high wood stockade fence with new 6' high wood stockade fence.

54 1625 Avon Place, N.W.
Lester H. Shor

Remove existing two-story structure between lots 852 and 832. Erect garden wall between existing structures. Remove paving and replace with garden. Brick side opening. Replace windows and front facade (resubmission refer to OG 77-48).

ACTION: Issue permit. 2/16/77

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON THE OLD GEORGETOWN ACT

22 February, 1977

PROJECT

ADDRESS AND OWNER

NO.

OG 77-
56

1534 32nd Street, N.W.
Lawrence Hausman

12.67' x 13' addition to rear of townhouse.

ACTION: Do not issue permit. No objection to ad addition to this house provided a suitable design can be developed. Curved end walls and sloping glass are inappropriate for use within the historic district. Restudy should include the vertical alignment of elements on all floors. 2/16/77

57

1420 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
The Pants Corral

Two non-illuminated painted signs: one single-faced,
one double-faced.

ACTION: Do not issue permit. Recommend a single sign and suggest a hanging sign, simpler in shape, material, and letter style than that proposed. 2/16/77

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON THE SHIPSTEAD-LUCE ACT

22 February, 1977

PROJECT

NO. ADDRESS AND OWNER

SL 77-

23 453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.

New office/retail building.

453 New Jersey Avenue, S.E. Associates

ACTION: Preliminary approval subject to approval of working drawings, material samples, signs, lighting, and landscaping. 2/3/77

24 410 1st Street, S.E.

New brick facing and utility core addition.

MAR-PENN Partnership, Ltd.

ACTION: Do not issue permit. Question demolition of Athens Carry-Out building as being a 19th century residential structure in this historic district. Brick veneer and mansard roof as proposed not recommended. Appearance from 1st Street is far better in its existing condition with cornice, pediment, and original brick than that of proposal. Though changing first floor on 1st Street is not objectionable, serious re-study is recommended. 2/3/77

25 412 1st Street, S.E.

New three-story structure with two levels of basement parking.

MAR-PENN Partnership, Ltd.

ACTION: Do not issue permit. Proposed character with mansard roof and entrance facing alley is wholly unsuited to historic area or urban area several blocks from the United States Capitol. Recommend restudy with a much higher caliber of design intent. 2/3/77

26 718 15th Street, N.W.

Provide new lettering on building to read "American Security Bank". Letters to be gold leaf and logo color submitted. Install two flagpoles on building. Change bronze plaque on 15th Street elevation. Construct new entrance on Pennsylvania Avenue.

American Security and Trust Co.

ACTION: Do not issue permit. No objection to concept of new entrance. Scale and character of existing lettering on upper sides of building is recommended in place of overly bold and unrefined letters proposed. Small sign proposed over new entrance not recommended as shown; suggest placing letters over new doorway within recess. Restudy doors and transom area to provide better proportions and more unified appearance; suggest a very plain all-glass solution. Flagpoles sticking out of pilasters not recommended. 2/11/77

27 229 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E.

Remove existing show window, doors, signs. Install flush window, door, and sign.

George Pennington

ACTION: Do not issue permit. Backlighting translucent letters not recommended for this location; suggest opaque-faced backlighted white letters. Thickness of fascia not recommended; limit to existing depth. Logo on glass is excessive signage. 2/11/77

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON THE SHIPSTEAD-LUCE ACT

22 February, 1977

PROJECT

ADDRESS AND OWNER

NO.

SL 77-
29

438 Canal Street, S.E.
Dunphy Properties, Inc.

Addition to building, one room approximately ten feet
wide.

ACTION: Issue permit. 2/17/77

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON HISTORIC SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS

22 February, 1977

<u>NO.</u>	<u>SQUARE, LOT, ADDRESS AND OWNER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
HS 77- 25	Square 1269, Lots 917, 861 3025 Orchard Alley, N.W. Kevin F. X. Delaney	Conversion of Assessment and Taxation Lots 917 and 861 to a record lot.
ACTION:	Not recommended. Insufficient information has been submitted on the exact nature of the subdivision and its purpose to render an approval. 1/27/77	
26	Square 1242, Lot 806 3014 O Street, N.W. Jeannette Beall Strong	Conversion of Assessment and Taxation Lot 806 to a record lot.
ACTION:	Not recommended. Insufficient information has been submitted on the exact nature of the subdivision and its purpose to render an approval. 1/27/77	
28	Square 2501, Lots 9 through 14 2551 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. The Islamic Center of Washington, D.C.	Conversion of Assessment and Taxation Lot 811 into a record lot prior to submitting plans for an addition.
ACTION:	No objection. 2/11/77	

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
22 February, 1977

The meeting convened at 10:30 a.m. in the Commission of Fine Arts offices at 708 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Members Present:

Hon. J. Carter Brown, Chairman
Hon. Philip W. Buchen
Hon. Victorine du Pont Homsey
Hon. Eli S. Jacobs
Hon. Frederick D. Nichols
Hon. Kevin Roche

Staff Present:

Mr. Charles H. Atherton, Secretary
Mr. Donald B. Myer, Assistant Secretary
Miss Lynda L. Brown
Mr. Jeffrey R. Carson
Mr. J. L. Sibley Jennings, Jr.
Mrs. Sue A. Kohler
Mrs. Nancy N. Lusher

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Swearing in of Philip W. Buchen, new member of the Commission of Fine Arts.

B. Dates of next meetings approved as: 5 April, 1977
26 April, 1977

C. Minutes of January, 1977 meeting, approved.

D. Letter from Donald Shannon, ANC 3-A Chairman, on Demolition Techniques in Georgetown. The Assistant Secretary informed the members that Mr. Shannon was seeking the Commission's help in controlling demolition methods in Georgetown. Vibration during recent razing had been damaging to nearby townhouses. The Assistant Secretary explained that this could be accomplished simply through existing regulations and razing permit wording. The members agreed that the Commission should do whatever possible to aid the citizens in this matter.

EXHIBITS A & B

II. SUBMISSIONS-REVIEWS

A. Smithsonian Institution

National Zoological Park, Beaver Valley Area. The Secretary led a discussion of this project, since a project model had been studied previously by the Commission at the architect's office.

The Chairman expressed concern that work at this site was proceeding before the Commission's review. The Secretary said this work involved site clearance and minor grading.

The exhibit design called for a number of manmade rocks. Mrs. Homsey noted that to be effective and natural in appearance, these artificial rocks must seem to come out of the earth and be structurally realistic. The Secretary said he had some reservations about the number of these "rocks" being used, and wondered whether, in some places, they should be used in such an artificial manner. The Commission had been impressed by the slides of similar installations elsewhere. The Chairman thought the model probably did not give a true representation of the actual appearance, and as the members had no objection to the design concept, it was approved.

B. General Services Administration

Veterans Administration Hospital, Wing "A", Enclosure of Fourth Floor Terrace. The Assistant Secretary showed the members drawings and photographs of the project, explaining that it involved enclosing an open sundeck with facade to match the rest of the building. The members had no objection and approved it unanimously.

EXHIBIT C

C. D.C. Department of Economic Development

Old Georgetown Act

1. OG 77-58, 1632 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Demolition of Existing Structure and Replacement with New Building of Similar Appearance - Resubmission. The Assistant Secretary reviewed the previous action. The proposed design had been disapproved by both the Georgetown Board and the Landmarks Committee. The Board's recommendation was that the porch and front addition be removed, the old facade retained, and some kind of Victorian door, show window, and basement entry be designed. There was no objection to new construction behind the facade or extension of the building to the rear.

The architect, Mr. Elliott Gitlin, was introduced and said his main concern now was the safety factor - how to adequately shore up the free-standing facade and get men and equipment through the front, if permission could not be obtained from the two adjacent property owners for bringing equipment in from the rear. Mr. Roche thought shoring up the wall during construction was not much of a problem. Mr. Gitlin and Mr. Wolpe, the developer, were advised to continue working towards a solution along the lines suggested. The issuance of a permit was not recommended.

2. Appendix 1, approved.

Shipstead-Luce Act

1. SL 77-28, 2710 Brandywine Street, N.W., New Single-Family Dwelling. The Assistant Secretary showed the members a model and drawings of this project. The house would sit high on the site and far back on the lot, making it only marginally visible from the park. The park elevation would be of an unobtrusive design in a silver grey stained board. The members had no objection and approved the project unanimously.

2. Appendix 2, approved.

D. National Park Service, National Capital Region

1. Installation of Bust of Justice William O. Douglas, Georgetown Barge Landing, C. & O. Canal. The Secretary showed a photograph of this bust, executed by a Park Service employee, Ms. Wendy Ann Ross. The bronze bust would be placed on a stone base, in a planted area at the barge landing near 30th Street. The members were pleased with the likeness of Justice Douglas. For the base they recommended a rough granite, thinking it in keeping with the canal and its stone walls. The Chairman noted that proper planting around the sculpture would be needed to help its scale in the space. The project was unanimously approved. EXHIBIT D

2. Bernardo de Galvez Statue, Final Pedestal and Site Plans. The Secretary showed a drawing of the statue on the proposed 13-foot-high rectangular pedestal of grey granite, with an inscription. The Secretary noted that the statue will face directly north instead of being placed perpendicular to Virginia Avenue as originally intended. A paved area, of matching granite blocks, was planned around the pedestal with grass beyond. The Chairman and Mr. Nichols asked if the pavers could be set in grass instead of concrete, or, if this was not feasible, wondered if the joints could be low enough so moss would grow, giving a little relief to the stone of the pedestal and paving. Mr. Fish, representing the Park Service, said he saw no problems in using the moss, and the members approved the design of the pedestal and its setting unanimously. EXHIBIT E

3. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, West Potomac Park. Mr. Euguen Keogh, chairman of the Roosevelt Memorial Commission, made a few introductory remarks and stated that Senator Mark Hatfield, who was unable to be present, wanted to convey to the Commission his complete approval of the project. Mr. Keogh then introduced Mr. Lawrence Halprin, landscape architect, who showed slides to brief the new members on the thinking behind his design. He pointed out the division of the memorial into four spaces, each defined by granite garden walls on which would be inscribed, in appropriate places,

quotations from the President's speeches. Bronze bas reliefs will also be placed on the walls. Then Mr. Halprin talked about the importance of water in his design as symbolic of the many events in the President's life connected with water or the sea. He said his use of water had two aspects - quiet running water and splashing waterfalls which would be carried throughout the memorial to give a sense of continuity. Mr. Halprin added that his use of water also had its practical aspect, in that its sound would diminish overhead airplane noise. He said a second form of continuity would be achieved by using a single paving material. This paving would consist of large, rectangular pieces of red-toned granite laid in a random pattern. This same granite would be used for the walls, but with a rough surface. Where there are to be inscriptions the granite will be polished. Mr. Halprin went on to say that the paving would have to be laid on a concrete slab because of unstable soil conditions.

The building which Mr. Halprin called the interpretive center was discussed next. Here recordings of Roosevelt's speeches would be heard and various other interpretive materials made available. There are also plans for a small restaurant. Mr. Halprin said the building would be placed behind garden walls and because of the way it is designed would hardly be visible. He introduced the architect, Mr. Robert Marquis, who said his building will appear as an underground structure because of berming and a sod roof. A true underground structure was not feasible because of soil conditions.

The Chairman felt the design had improved and gained in clarity, simplicity, and continuity. He was happy to see that the overly complicated "urban playground" aspect of the earlier designs had been eliminated. Mr. Roche found the design development excellent.

Mr. Keogh rose to thank the Commission and to say that after all these years, thirty-two since Roosevelt's death, he hoped that the Memorial Commission was at last on its way toward actual construction.

After Mr. Keogh and Mr. Halprin left, the Secretary showed slides of earlier designs for the Roosevelt Memorial, beginning with the Pedersen and Tilney designs of the early 1960's, followed by Marcel Breuer's design of 1967 and ending with the earlier version of Mr. Halprin's design. Mr. Buchen wondered why there was still so much paving in the latest design, and the Chairman said it would be difficult to cut it any further because of the enormous amount of foot traffic expected. The members were much pleased with the progress that had been made and gave the design their unanimous approval, subject to the review of sculpture and other details at future meetings.

EXHIBIT F

E. D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development

"Streets for People", 8th Street Lighting. The Secretary reminded the members that they had seen these plans earlier, in the conceptual stage, but said there had been some changes in the direction of simplification and also a new lighting plan. Light standards which would tie in with those now being proposed for Pennsylvania Avenue would be installed. The paving pattern would be simplified and all old trees replaced with new plantings.

Mr. Sherman of the D.C. Government was introduced and discussed the changes in paving, which would now use two instead of the three kinds of brick originally suggested. He said the street lighting standards would be 25 feet high, and that at present there are no plans to add lower, decorative lights because of cost. In general the 8th Street development would correspond to that in front of the Portrait Gallery, but would be much simpler. The vendors, who have been on F Street for many years, would be moved to 8th Street to alleviate the traffic problems they cause on F Street.

The members were very sympathetic to the plan to simplify the 8th Street development, especially after viewing what has already been installed on F Street. They could not give their approval to the lighting, however, until after a final lighting scheme was approved for Pennsylvania Avenue.

EXHIBIT G

Historic Subdivisions

Appendix 3, approved.

F. Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation

Pennsylvania Avenue Landscape and Lighting Plans. Mr. John Woodbridge of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation was introduced and said he would like to present new plans for sidewalks, trees, and lighting along the avenue. He introduced Mr. Donald Olson of Sasaki Associates, who said that changes in the plan, particularly the retention of some of the old buildings, had required a revision in the concept of the edges of the avenue, which would now be more irregular. He noted that there are only about three blocks on the avenue where the old concept of 50-foot sidewalks and three rows of trees (on the north side) could be applied. With these changes in the plan, emphasis would now be on the trees themselves to maintain uniformity down the avenue. Mr. Olson said that with the old scheme, the low trees used had limited the vista; a taller variety was now being suggested. Also, he felt that three rows on the north was excessive and two would be sufficient. He showed slides of the Champs Elysees in Paris to demonstrate his point. He suggested that the willow oak would make

a fine avenue tree because of its straight, formal nature and the fact that any low branches can be easily pruned. Lindens, which are low-growing trees, have already been planted in front of the FBI building in accordance with the old scheme, but would be replaced with willow oaks. The lindens would be used elsewhere.

Mr. Ray Grenald, lighting consultant, spoke next and outlined his plan for lighting the avenue for the benefit of both motorists and pedestrians. He said the aim of the lighting for motorists would be to keep the source anonymous and direct light onto the street, not into the air. He proposed dark colored, tall (40 feet) standards for this purpose. They would be placed 10 feet back from the curb and would be essentially hidden by the trees. The light source would be placed in a box-like shield to keep it invisible and would project out over the street. These lights would be spaced 75 feet apart.

Three feet from the curb would be a decorative street light, not brightly lit, 18 feet high, with a 37½-foot spacing. This would be, possibly, one of the traditional Washington street lights and would give a sense of direction down the avenue without producing glare or being too distracting.

Attached to the trees would be a third light source, to emphasize the branch structure and provide light for the sidewalk. None of the lights would use sodium vapor, according to Mr. Grenald. He considers this lighting most unsatisfactory because of the glare it produces, its unhappy effect on the appearance of people, and because, on Pennsylvania Avenue, it causes the Capitol dome to look pale and bluish in color. Mr. Roche and other members questioned whether the decorative and tree lights would be sufficient to light the sidewalks, or whether their light would be lost in the trees. The PADC representatives replied that they intend to have a mockup so that the exact effect can be seen before they offer any final solution. The members agreed that this should be done, and on Pennsylvania Avenue itself, if at all possible.

Paving for the avenue was discussed next. Plans for using granite have been abandoned because of cost, and the material now suggested is sheet asphalt, possibly combined with brick and cobbles for special lanes. Sidewalks and crosswalks would be beige or brown brick.

Mr. Schneider of the District Department of Transportation had some reservations about the new plans, not in regard to design, but concerning replacements and cost. He said unusual bricks, light fixtures, etc. are often made for only a few years and cannot be supplied when replacements are needed. Also, he was concerned about the possibility of using too many lights and the cost of operating

them. He said many new projects are now overlit, and the energy shortage will mean that operating costs will be a serious problem for the District Government. The Chairman said that in regard to Pennsylvania Avenue, at least, the Federal Government should probably meet that expense. There was also some concern shown by the District officials that the level of lighting along the sidewalks would be too low.

Mr. Woodbridge was asked to comment on the 8th Street lighting. He said that at present only the street lighting standards, like those planned for Pennsylvania Avenue but not as tall, were contemplated for the area between E and F Streets. These provide a down-light only and thus would not emphasize the irregularity of the axis between the Archives Building and the Portrait Gallery.

The Chairman told Mr. Woodbridge that the Commission approved the paving and planting schemes, but at this point could not approve the lighting plans, which represent quite a departure from what now exists and must be seen in mockup form before they can be evaluated.

EXHIBIT H

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m. and the members left for the Freer Gallery to inspect a number of objects for acquisition.

Signed,



Charles H. Atherton
Secretary

GEORGETOWN ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3 A

RECEIVED
THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FEB 7 1977

February 4, 1977

NOTED

The Commission of Fine Arts
708 Jackson Place, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

Gentlemen:

This Commission, after examining the problems associated with the demolition of buildings in the Georgetown historic district, concluded at its regular meeting on February 2, 1977, that more careful controls of such operations are needed to protect historic buildings in accordance with the "Old Georgetown Act".

Such protection could best be afforded by the requirement of the Commission of Fine Arts that any demolition permit granted for the Georgetown area prohibit the use of caterpillar-tread equipment and wrecking balls.

We trust that you can assure us of your cooperation in this matter and would be grateful to hear from you.

Sincerely,



Donald H. Shannon
Chairman, ANC 3 A

4 March, 1977

Dear Mr. Shannon:

As Don Myer indicated to you in his call the other day, the Commission discussed your letter and is prepared to take up the matter with the D.C. Permit Office which regulates all demolition procedures.

Would it be possible for you to attend a meeting with D.C. officials and us in order to discuss the problem? Since you are an ANC Chairman and know how a lot of the affected parties feel about the subject, I think it would be very helpful.

Let us know and I'll try to set up a meeting for sometime toward the end of next week.

Sincerely yours,

Charles N. Atherton
Charles N. Atherton
Secretary

Mr. Donald M. Shannon
1020 29th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

4 March, 1977

Dear Mr. Gavazzi:

The Commission of Fine Arts approved additions to the Veterans Administration Hospital at its meeting on February 22, 1977. The proposed addition seems very simple and straightforward, with no potential adverse effects on the appearance of the hospital. Our only caution would be that the materials used in the addition match as closely as possible those existing on the structure.

Sincerely yours,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. A. A. Gavazzi
Director
Veterans Administration Hospital
Washington, D.C. 20422

JCB/DBM:nl

4 March, 1977

Dear Mr. Fish:

At its February 22, 1977 meeting the Commission of Fine Arts approved the sculptural bust of Justice William O. Douglas, its location at the Barge Landing of the C. & O. Canal, and the grey granite base for the sculpture. The Commission found the sculpture to be an effective likeness and will be available for consultation on the exact arrangement of the sculpture on the site, at the time it is installed.

Sincerely yours,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Manus J. Fish
Director, National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

JCB/DBM:nl

4 March, 1977

Dear Mr. Fish;

The Commission of Fine Arts reviewed pedestal designs for the statue of Bernardo de Galvez at its February 22, 1977 meeting. The Commission approved the revised design and the sample of grey granite submitted for review.

We appreciate the efforts of the Park Service to coordinate this project with the Commission since its inception.

Sincerely yours,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Manus J. Fish
Director, National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

JCB/DBM:nl

4 March, 1977

Dear Jack,

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on February 22, 1977, approved the final revised designs for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial in West Potomac Park.

We expect that both the memorial and the interpretive center will be subject to further scrutiny as the design develops. The Commission looks forward to reviewing all of these details, ranging from lighting to sculpture, landscaping, and stonework. In a work of this importance, no detail is too small for careful scrutiny and we would hope that detailed models, especially those that would show the visitors center and the various sculptural proposals, will be prepared as part of the final studies. They will be useful in determining how the various elements will mesh together.

Sincerely yours,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Manus J. Fish
Director, National Capital Region
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

JCB/DBM:nl

4 March, 1977

Dear Mr. Jacobs:

The Commission of Fine Arts reviewed modifications to the approved design for the 8th Street section of "Streets for People" during its February 22, 1977 meeting. In approving the modifications, the Commission is encouraged by the efforts at simplification. During our inspection of F Street on the day of the meeting, the consensus was that any efforts at simplicity should be encouraged. Our one reservation concerns the lighting. We find we cannot approve the lighting which is based on the Pennsylvania Avenue scheme until that scheme itself has been reviewed and approved. The Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation is in the process of preparing a full-scale mockup of their proposed lighting for inspection at either our April or May meeting. We recommend that the design of the fixtures for 8th Street be held in abeyance until that scheme has final approval.

Sincerely yours,

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

Mr. Lorenzo W. Jacobs, Jr.
Director, D.C. Department of
Housing and Community Development
107 District Building
14th & E Streets, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

JCB/DBM:nl

4 March, 1977

Dear General Quesada:

The Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation staff and consultants made a presentation to the Commission of Fine Arts during its February 22, 1977 meeting on landscaping, lighting, and paving proposals for the Avenue.

The new paving patterns and the choice of the Willow oak as the Avenue tree met with Commission approval. The willow oak is a sensible choice for Washington's particular climate and traffic conditions. A great many of this species were planted here in the late '60's, notably on Rhode Island Avenue, and they are doing particularly well. Willow oaks will certainly be a handsome addition to the Avenue and undoubtedly will be more successful than the linden trees that were planted in front of the FBI Building. On the south side of the Avenue, where the present red oaks are basically attractive and stable for the moment, it would appear to make sense to retain the existing row of trees at least until the planting in the new row of willow oaks is fairly well established.

The subject of lighting is a complicated and difficult one, as you know. Over the last few years the Commission has helped coordinate illumination efforts within the District on behalf of the Park Service, the Architect of the Capitol, and the D.C. Department of Transportation. Not only has this been a recent effort, but one that stretches well back into the 1920's. The PADC consultants' proposal reflects a radical departure from existing Pennsylvania Avenue lighting. As might be expected, the Commission has reservations over several elements of the scheme. We feel it is essential to construct an accurate mockup in order to fairly gauge the overall effect. We are withholding our approval of this aspect of the plan until such mockups can satisfactorily convince the Commission that the best possible design solution has been achieved. During the Commission's inspection of the proposed area on the day of the meeting, members questioned the Mall light fixture which was suggested for possible use as an ornamental fixture for the Avenue. The feeling was that it was less suitable

4 March, 1977

2.

than the existing type of double-globe fixture for ornamental lighting. We also have certain reservations about the overhead lighting, and the need for 40-foot-high standards along the Avenue.

The Department of Transportation has told us they are not committed to the level of brightness for the Avenue surface that apparently these lights are designed to provide.

Finally, the Commission is not fully convinced that the up-lighting proposed for the trees will work well in all conditions, or adequately illuminate pedestrian spaces, building surfaces, and the trees as well as does the existing 1923 Washington globe.

The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for April 5th. The members of the Commission told me they would be able to come to a meeting on the evening before if the lighting demonstration would be ready for viewing.

Sincerely yours,

SIGNED

J. Carter Brown
Chairman

General Elwood R. Quesada
Chairman, Pennsylvania Avenue
Development Corporation
425 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

JCB/CHA:nl



